

**Office of Massachusetts Attorney General
Martha Coakley**



Call for Applications

Energy Education Mini-Grants

Release Date: June 1, 2008
Responses Due: July 15, 2008

Call for Applications
Energy Education Mini-Grants

The Attorney General's Office is pleased to be able to offer mini-grants to our local consumer programs to provide consumer outreach and education about energy costs.

Grants will be awarded in any amount up to \$5,000

The grants will be one time only payments to local consumer programs that will, individually or working with another non-profit organization, develop and implement specific projects addressing education and prevention, relative to the high cost of home heating and other utilities. Suggested topics can be found in Appendix A, though applicants are encouraged to design training responsive to the particular needs of their communities.

Grants will be due on July 15, 2008. Successful applicants will be notified on August 1, 2008 and awarded funds on or about August 15, 2008. All services provided under this grant must be completed by November 15, 2008.

Qualifications: First priority for funding will be to the existing Local Consumer Programs funded by the Attorney General's Office. In addition, applications will be accepted from any 501(c) 3 organization in good standing with the AGO Non-Profit and Public Charities Division and the Internal Revenue Service. Funding may also be provided to local governmental agencies: i.e. District Attorney's Office, Mayor's Office, Town Office of Elder Affairs. All organizations or offices must have been in existence at least one year prior to applying for the grant. The organization or office applying for the grant must have a focus on consumer education and prevention.

Project Description: Include specific goals you hope to accomplish, and steps you will take to accomplish them. Provide evidence to support likelihood that the project will be successful, i.e. past successes of your organization, similar projects in other areas, published articles on the method, etc. Give a timeline for when you hope to accomplish these goals by, including progress benchmarks and an end date.

Population to be served/Need: Please outline the population you wish to serve. Describe why this population needs education in this area. Include any relevant specific statistics. Please describe any special accommodations this population requires. Describe why your outreach efforts are particularly suited to this population.

Evaluation: Please outline a plan to evaluate your proposed project. Include what the definition of success for the project will be. Describe how you will collect data to help support your evaluation.

Organization/Staffing & volunteers: Give a brief description of the organization applying for the grant. Describe the staffing pattern for the project. Describe who will be

responsible for each specific task you hope to accomplish. Include compensation to any staff or volunteers in your line-item budget.

Budget: In a separate line item budget, please outline each expenditure you plan to make. Account for any dollar you plan to spend. Also note any in-kind donation.

Submission: Please submit the answers to the above questions as an attachment to grier.potter@state.ma.us no later than 4:00PM on July 15, 2008. The response may be no longer than seven double-spaced pages. Please use one inch margins and 12 point font. Resumes and line-item budget are not included in the seven page limit. Please also submit the following forms as attachments: Commonwealth Terms and Conditions, Form W9, Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing. Applicants must complete these forms in their entirety; however, applicants will defer ink signatures until grant award. After successful applicants are chosen, the completed paperwork will be returned to the successful applicants for original ink signatures. Successful applicants will also be required to complete the Standard Contract Form and Authorization for Electronic Funds Transfer at this time. Our office will not process payments without original ink signatures on all forms; copies of signatures are not acceptable and will delay payment. Payments will only be made via Electronic Funds Transfer.

Selection Process:

The amounts of the individual grants will determine the number that can be funded. Funds are being made available via the Local Consumer Aid Fund in the context of a consent decree arising from a dispute with a competitive energy supplier. All applications will be reviewed and scored by a committee of staff of the AGO. Applicants will be evaluated based on the following 100 point criteria:

- Qualifications – 5 Points
- Project Description -- 30 Points
- Population/Need – 25 points
- Budget – 10 Points
- Evaluation – 15 Points
- Staffing and Volunteers – 15 Points

All applicants will be notified as to the status of their application by letter on or before August 1, 2008. Information about successful applicants will also be posted on the AGO website, mass.gov/ago/grants. Any application that does not meet the submission requirements may be considered non-responsive and may be disqualified without further evaluation. The AGO may, at its discretion, determine that non-compliance is insubstantial and can be corrected, or that an alternative proposed by the applicant is an acceptable substitute. In such cases, the AGO may seek clarification, allow the applicant to make minor corrections, apply appropriate points adjustments in the evaluation, or apply a combination of all three remedies.

Reporting Requirements: Within 30 days of the project completion (as per outlined in proposed project section above), but no later than December 15, 2008, grantees must submit a written report to the AGO. This report must include a narrative of the project, goals accomplished, any successes, failures, or lessons learned, and a budget reconciliation. Any unspent funds must be returned to the Commonwealth.

Reasonable Accommodation: Applicants with disabilities that seek reasonable accommodation, which may include the receipt of the RFR information in an alternative format, must communicate such requests in writing to Grier H. Potter at grier.potter@state.ma.us no later than 4:00 p.m. EST on [date]. Requests for accommodation will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. An applicant requesting accommodation may be required to confirm his or her request in writing to the contact person. The request must state that it is based on a disability and specifically identify the accommodation desired. Although entities of the Commonwealth will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the requests of applicants with disabilities, they reserve the right to reject unreasonable requests.

Public Records: All responses and information submitted in response to this call for applications are subject to the Massachusetts Freedom of Information Law, M.G.L., Chapter 66, Section 10, and to Chapter 4, Section 7, Subsection 26. Any statements in submitted responses that are inconsistent with these statutes shall be disregarded.

Questions: Questions may be asked by email only to: grier.potter@state.ma.us. The deadline for questions is July 3, 2008. Questions and answers in their entirety will be posted on www.mass.gov/ago/grants.

Appendix A:
Suggested Topics for Training

. Suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Budget billing for home heating: How to evaluate the use of year-round payment plans and budget billing to plan for home heating in the winter.
- 2) Switching from oil to gas heat: Help consumers evaluate offers to switch their home heating system from oil to gas heat.
- 3) Tips for weatherization and energy efficiency: To lower all energy costs.
- 4) Programs and protections available to low-income consumers: Low-income discount rate, protections from shut-off for certain customers.
- 5) Reducing electricity costs through the use of a competitive supplier: Tips for choosing a competitive supplier, and helping consumers know about new electric suppliers in the state (that they may not be aware of).
- 6) Consumer Rights: Educate consumers as to their rights when entering into a contract with a supplier, such as the ability to cancel within 3 days and what a consumer should do if they believe that their service has been switched without authorization ("slamming").